

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian.

No. 25.

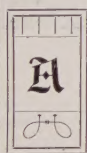
JULY, 1909.

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Notes of the Month.

N event of special interest to all our readers has occurred since the last number of this paper appeared. On Wednesday, June 16th, the adoption of the amended Code of Discipline by the unanimous vote of those attending the Annual Meeting of the Non-Subscribing Association gave formal expression to the desire for a union of our Irish Churches. Ever since the delivery of Dr. John Campbell's stirring address on "The Spirit of the Reformation," it has been generally felt that we could strive for no worthier ideal than that of the strong corporate Church life which it so eloquently advocated. The immediate outcome of such a feeling was the formation of a Committee entrusted with the task of preparing a scheme of re-organisation, which should in the first

place meet the wishes of the churches to be incorporated, and in the second place should carefully safeguard the interests of all concerned. For more than two years the work of preparation continued, this including not merely the drawing up of a scheme but also the consulting of the different congregations, together with the subsequent consideration of the suggestions received from the latter. Whenever possible the Code was amended in accordance with the recommendations of the different authorities consulted, so that at the Annual Meeting only a few minor amendments were received and embodied in the report of the Committee. Hence when all had been done that could be done to give the scheme final form it was unanimously approved by the meeting, and the Non-Subscribing Church of Ireland was thereby constituted.

No one will attempt to minimise the importance of the fact recorded above. But it is necessary to ask ourselves what still remains to be done. The answer to that question will cause little difficulty if we realise what corporate Church life demands from those who would realise its best possibilities and take advantage of its wider opportunities. The first essential is that we should learn to think in accordance with this wider conception of one united Church. As individual members or congregations our first consideration will not be so much what we can gain but what we can

give. That implies no lack of loyalty to our own individual church or congregation. Rather does it call for more, because the greater our devotion and loyalty to our own church the more it will have to contribute to the life of our newly-constituted Church. The latter can only be strong in so far as we make it so by giving it freely of our strength. Just in proportion as our individual interests are seen and served in the light of the larger ideal of one united Church will they cease to be unduly local and limited, and be informed with the spirit which seeketh not its own but others' good. Is it too much to expect of Christians who place character before creed that they will respond to the demand for the practical manifestation of self-sacrifice and mutual helpfulness? We, at least, are confident that the Non-Subscribing Presbyterians of Ireland will furnish the only fitting answer to that question by uniting unselfishly and whole-heartedly to give effect to the scheme now formally approved.

Our North of Ireland ministers were well represented at the Annual Meetings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association held during Whit-week in London. Dr. Mellone contributed to the programme of the well-attended Public Meeting in Essex Hall an address on "Religion and Theology" which met with great approval, while the Rev. J. A. Kelly read an informing ten-minutes' paper concerning our methods of co-ordination and co-operation in this district. In addition, the Revs. T. Dunkerley and H. J. Rossington were present at the meetings. Hence it is not surprising that there should be a desire on the part of the officials of the Association to give to, as well as to receive from, Ireland, and it is probable that in the autumn a strong deputation will come from London to hold a series of gatherings in Belfast and other centres. If such a visit can be made the means of arousing enthusiasm and giving impetus to our winter's work, the heartiest of Irish welcomes awaits the members of such a deputation.

Books and Magazines will be gratefully accepted for the Domestic Mission Library, and could be called for on receipt of a postcard, or may be sent direct to the Mission, 72, Stanhope St.

RADEMON (1st KILMORE) CONGREGATION.

(Continued.)

BY REV. JOHN ALEXANDER KELLY.

[NOTE.—This was written for the "Disciple," where it appeared in the May number of 1883. By request the Author has now revised and brought it up to date for this paper.]



RADEMON MANSE.

In 1728, an invitation was forwarded to and accepted by Mr. Samuel Fergie. In the same year his ordination took place, he being then in the 43rd year of his age. In keeping with a custom of the time, that obtained, at least, in country congregations, it was stipulated that the annual provision for his support should be partly in money and partly in commodities of domestic use. The quota promised and secured to him by bond was £30 per annum in cash, two hundred loads of turf, and one peck of meal from each seatholder in the congregation. In addition to the above, there was a minister's residence, and attached to it, and devoted to his benefit, was a valuable farm of 80 acres of the

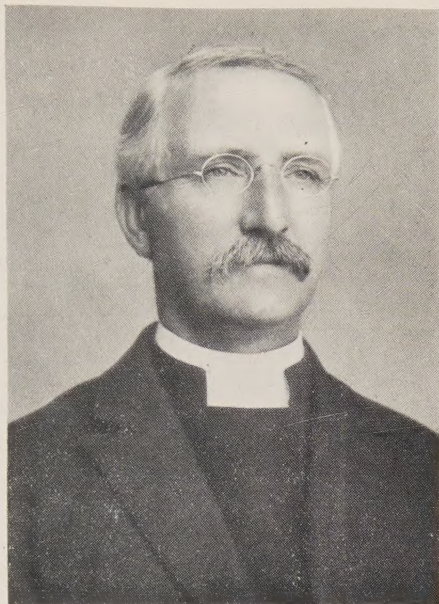
best land in the parish, at a very moderate rent. With respect to the loss of this farm to the congregation, the following is taken from an anonymous manuscript:—"Unfortunately for the Presbyterian Society established here [Kilmore], unfortunately for succeeding ministers, due care had not been exercised to secure to the people the property of their valuable parish farm. In this, as in many similar instances of late occurrence [the MS. bears no date] one of those proceedings shows itself, which too often ensues from an ill-judged and foolish confidence, and is peculiarly calculated to injure the interests and respectability of Presbyterians. The farm having been held by a terminable lease under Lord de Clifford, and the term of the lease having nearly expired, Mr. Fergie renewed it in his *own name*, and thus converted what should have been the sacred right of the people to the benefit of himself and family."

In the summer of 1730, by order of the General Synod which met at Dunganon, Kilmore, and three neighbouring congregations with their ministers (Revs. S. Fergie, James Macalpine, Archibald Dickson, and John King) were added to the Presbytery of Killyleagh, on account of a considerable diminution that had taken place in the number of its members.

After Mr. Fergie's death, and early in the year 1767, Mr. Moses Neilson (afterwards D.D.) was called from the Presbytery of Strabane, under whose care he had been a probationer, and on the 8th April of the same year was ordained to the pastoral charge of Kilmore congregation. At his settlement the mode of providing in part for the support of the minister, by contributions of turf, meal, &c., ceased; and by way of compensation a stipend of £50 a year was promised.

(To be continued.)

A beautiful behaviour is better than a beautiful form; it gives a higher pleasure than statues and pictures; it is the finest of fine arts.—*Emerson*.



REV. ALEX. O. ASHWORTH.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONFERENCE AT DOWNPATRICK.



On Saturday, June 5th, the Tenth Annual Conference was held at Downpatrick. Fully 450 persons assembled in the Old Meeting-House, Stream Street, and good weather favoured the occasion. At 3-15, the proceedings began by the Convener (Rev. Alexander O. Ashworth, of Belfast) reading a beautiful hymn, entitled "Song of the Pilgrim Soul," by Henry Van Dyke, and prayer by Rev. M. S. Dunbar, M.A., *pastor loci*. Letters of apology were received from Revs. W. Fielding (Ballyclare), W. Weatherall (Moira), and C. Thrift (Ballyhemlin). The Convener reported that the Moneyrea Congregation had sent invitation for the Conference to be held there in 1910, and this was recommended to the Sunday School Committee for acceptance, on the Convener's motion, seconded by Rev. J. A. Kelly. The President of the Association of Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterians and Other Free Church Christians, Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.Sc. (in the chair), introduced the readers of three ten minutes' papers on "Our Aim as Sunday School Teachers."

Mr. H. Percy Andrews (Comber) said:—"The highest aim we can have is to get our children to really understand and to obey those two great Commandments, which Christ called the greatest commandments of all. We all know them; first, "Thou shalt love



the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"; and the second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The more we think about them the better we understand them. We get a clearer idea of their importance and greatness. It is impossible in this one paper to fully discuss these commandments in all their bearings, but I am going to try to put before you one or two points which may help us to realise the importance of the work which we have undertaken. In the first place, we may find it difficult to explain to our class what is meant by "To love God." The power of loving, which is perhaps God's greatest gift to us, shows itself in earliest childhood. It is natural, too, and right, for children to begin by loving those whom they know and who are kind to them, and to love them in return, but it is our duty to expand this love, to teach our pupils to love all men and to teach them to love God. To tell them that there is a God and that we must love him will not do, but we should be able to teach even very small children of some of the wonderful things He has made, and how His love provides for us. We might teach a young class, for instance, that one of the things we require most is bread, and how bread is made from wheat which has to be sown in the ground, and it then requires both water and heat to make it

grow. If it did not get enough water it would die, and if it did not get enough heat it would die, but our heavenly Father has provided both of these things: the water comes to us as rain and we get heat from the sun. Again we should feel a great want if we had no railway trains and no steamboats. It might appear to us at first that we make these for ourselves; but if we think again we find that to enable us to make them we want some iron. This we find provided for us, and we also find coal to make our fires with. In this way we may be able to get even some of our youngest scholars to know there is a God and also something of His wisdom and loving care for all of us, and if we can manage to do this I think that we shall find that our children will love our heavenly Father quite naturally. In teaching the second great commandment, we must remember that our neighbour does not only mean the person who lives next door, but really means every human being in the world; and then let us think of the difference it would make to the world. In the first place, if all nations loved one another we should have no fear of war, and all the enormous sums of money spent every year preparing for war could be used for better purposes. Among ourselves we would have no quarrels, no desire to hurt anyone's feelings, or property, and finally we would be trying to help

everyone as much as we could, and they would be doing the same for us. Now to teach these things or anything else, requires a good deal of thought and all the help we can get. I may be allowed to mention one or two things which may be of some assistance. First, it is very important that the teachers should really know and understand each child in their class, and then they will know how to get the best results. We all know that some children are timid, and if we are severe with them we only frighten them instead of doing them any good. The next child may be full of mischief, and if he is not corrected he plays all sorts of tricks and quite spoils the lesson, for no matter how interested the class may be in what the teacher is telling them, perhaps one of them is not, and if that does happen a teacher who thoroughly knows the class can make some little change which will put matters right. Secondly, I think that all of us should have some books. Just now I do not mean books to read in class, but books that will teach us something during the preparation of our lesson. I have received the greatest possible help from Dean Stanley's "History of the Jewish Church," Dean Farrar's "Life of Christ" and "The Life of St. Paul." Books like these should be available to every teacher. It is, of course, most convenient for each teacher to have their own books, but I think it would be only fair that each Sunday School should provide a Teachers' Library. It might be started with only one book, but surely others might be added from time to time; even one or two shillings a year would do wonders in the next ten. To point out the importance of this matter I need only remind you of the very real assistance that the teachers of the senior class received from Mr. Rossington's papers in *The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian* on the passages in Isaiah, whilst preparing for the recent examinations. In conclusion, if the teachers of each Sunday School could arrange to meet together regularly during the winter months and take turns at either reading a paper on some subject that they have been teaching, or read about, or if one of them would give a lesson to the others in the same way that he would teach a class, it would be of very real benefit to every teacher taking part in the meetings.

In the course of her paper, Miss C. M. Patterson (Holywood) said:—"We are gradually coming to see that Channing was right when he said that '*The great aim of the Sunday School is to awaken the soul of the pupil.*' The word '*soul*' we may define in the words of our Association's Catechism as '*The inward man, the real self having the powers of thought, feeling and will, and linking us to God.*'" Nowadays men and women are awakening more and more to the great importance and responsibility of Sunday School work, and as a result of this we find summer schools, correspondence classes and conferences (such as this) being

held up and down the country to help Sunday School teachers, and they do a great deal of good, there is no doubt. Taking Sunday Schools in general, there are two distinct ways of regarding their "*aim*"—First, The building up of a good character—that is the teaching of the art of "*Right Living*," as it has been called; and secondly, the building up of the particular church that the school belongs to. When this subject was chosen for our Conference this year, and when I was asked to give a ten minutes' paper on it, I thought it would be interesting to obtain various definitions from practical teachers, of what each one considered to be his or her "*aim*" in Sunday School teaching. A number of teachers, and others, belonging to various churches—Episcopalian, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, and our own—kindly responded to my request that they should write out their "*aim*" on a slip of paper for me, and I shall give you some of the replies. A Roman Catholic teacher says her aim is "*To teach the children to know, love and serve God, here on earth, so as to be happy with Him for ever in Heaven.*" An Episcopalian curate says:—"The aim of a Sunday School teacher ought to be the production of character." A teacher in one of our own schools in London, who has had a great influence with a large class of factory girls, sent me very much the same definition:—"To build up character, or rather to develop it, as we can only draw out what is within. Character, of course, being taken in its finest sense, as not only what is strong in truth, beauty and wisdom, but is also in tune with the Infinite." A Presbyterian minister says:—"The aim of the Sunday School teacher is, to show the scholars *individually* how Jesus Christ can help them to be true men and women, pure and honourable, brave and kind, fit and eager to do their part in the uplifting of humanity." Another teacher, a staunch Episcopalian, writes:—"I think I teach in Sunday School in order to build the walls of the Church that is to be." Another splendid teacher, belonging to the same Church, says her aim is "*To help the child's mind to grasp the fact that there is a Kingdom of Heaven on earth.*" Another Church teacher says:—"The aim of Sunday School teachers should be to impart a knowledge of the Bible, and of the Canons of the Church, to which the scholars belong." This is the only Sectarian answer that I received. A former headmaster of a Preparatory Public School sends me the following:—"The object of Sunday School teaching should be to endeavour to get the pupil interested in the world in which he lives—from any aspect whatever—art or history, or geography, or any other." A member of my own Bible Class writes:—"The first aim of a Sunday School teacher should be to make the lessons as bright and attractive as possible, so that the scholars will take a delight in coming to school, and not come merely because their parents make them; for

when all is said and done, the hardest task of all is to get the young people to attend. Once they come, it remains with the teacher whether they stay or not. In the choosing of the subject to form the lesson, the teacher should take a subject with which he or she is conversant, and explain it *thoroughly* to the scholars, in such a manner as to elevate their thoughts, and set them thinking for themselves, for once they begin to reason among themselves there will be no more difficulty as to regularity of attendance." It seems to me that if we teachers want to sum up an ideal aim and method of Sunday School teaching we might take and apply to our work that verse in the Prophet Hosea, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love, I was to them as they that lift up the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them." You see we must be strong, we must be loving, we must put meat—good nourishing food for the soul—before our scholars, we should *not* feed them, but we should so "lift up the yoke"—prepare their minds—that they will take the meat of their own free will. What kind of meat should we use? it may be asked. Should we confine ourselves to the Bible, and should we or should we not teach our simple Unitarianism and contrast it with the "orthodox" doctrines? I think the Bible should certainly take the first place, but our aim being to "waken the soul," we must only use the passages that stir up and elevate our own souls—"Thy soul must overflow if thou another soul would reach." As to doctrine, when the pupil has awakened and has been inspired with a fervent love of truth, there will naturally arise a desire to know what our churches stand for, and how they differ from the "orthodox" churches. It is *then* that the teacher must be prepared to explain as fully as possible our history and our position. In conclusion, let me quote more fully what Dr. Channing said about the "aim" of the Sunday School, and which is as true to-day as it was when he said it seventy-two years ago:—"The great end of the Sunday School is to awaken the soul of the pupil. . . . It is *not* to stamp our minds irresistibly on the young, but to stir up their own; *not* to make them see with *our* eyes, but to look enquiringly and steadily with their own; *not* to give them a definite amount of knowledge, but to inspire a fervent love of truth. . . . *Not* to tell them that God is good, but to help them to see and feel His love in all that He does within and around them; *not* to tell them of the dignity of Christ, but to open their inward eye to the beauty and greatness of His character, and to enkindle aspirations after a kindred virtue."

The Rev. G. J. Slipper (Moneyrea) remarked:—"Our aim is distinctly moral and religious, and the teaching that we are called upon to impart is for the development of character: the awakening of affection and the culture of the soul. These ideals, it seems to me, stand supreme; and all others are

secondary. These are the 'things that matter' in the programme of our Sunday School work; and for these every teacher should consecrate all the talents which he or she possesses. In one of those brilliant articles or essays, so instructively written weekly by 'J. B.' in *The Christian World*, and probably read by, or at least familiar to, most of us, the writer recently, in treating of spiritual teaching, makes reference to a correspondence received from a Sunday School teacher who expressed a distrust of the 'educational methods' that are springing up in Sunday School teaching to-day. 'What idea,' he asks, 'can blackboard teaching, models and such-like things, give of the life of Jesus in the soul?' 'Mind enlightenment,' he adds, 'is aimed at in the day schools,' which he seems to think is the proper sphere for it, and he goes on to advocate very strongly that 'soul development' ought to be the prayerful aim of the Sunday School teacher with the children in his or her charge.' There is much, I think, with which we can agree in this statement, although those 'educational methods' of which that correspondent is so suspicious may be very useful adjuncts even to the greater work of soul development. At the same time, it is very essential that we should know where to put the right emphasis; and some wise words written many years ago for the S.S. Helper by Dr. Martineau, may help us to do this. Writing under a title similar to our own, he points out very simply what probably that correspondent meant to convey in his remarks, *viz.*—"That the Sunday School is not meant merely to gain another day for day-school work, but to use that work for a higher purpose.' For besides *thinking* right the children should be trained to *do* right; to be wanting in no duty, and dead to no real and good affection; and in the forming of these two habits of mind, the Sunday School teacher can materially strengthen the hands of the parents and largely benefit those who come under his care and influence. But the question here suggests itself: How are we to accomplish such an aim? I shall assume that we are all agreed as to the aim, but how may we best fulfil it? There may be a great diversity of opinions regarding the methods, yet the best way in which we can really accomplish our task is by a deep realisation of the potentialities of the child's mind. The average boy or girl whom we meet in our classes on Sunday is possessed of great forces, and we must aim at modulating those forces to their proper application in conduct and in life. As the Rev. J. J. Wright, one of the most successful of writers upon this subject, very truly observes:—"There are physical forces in the scholars, as potential as a dynamo. There are *moral* forces in them as dangerous as dynamite, and yet as good, for good purposes.' And I would dare even to add to this statement the assertion that there are spiritual forces as vital to young life as they are comforting to the

aged. Again, then, our aim as Sunday School teachers is to interpret the true meanings of the full power of these forces: to get the children to understand the art of managing, as well as the means of making, the highest use of them. This, it seems to me, is also of paramount importance in our work: that we shall feel the responsibility of our high calling as teachers to fasten the minds of the scholars whilst they are with us (and I fully admit our opportunity is small) upon the meanings of the life which God has given them; in short, to teach them the true art of living. Personally, I have derived much profitable help from such books as Mr. John Dendy's series of addresses given by him to his class of young men, and embodied in a book published by our S.S. Association under the title, 'A Successful Life,' but this class of book and study is essentially for the elder scholars alone. On the other hand we may find plenty of material for the work in the simple stories of the Old and New Testament which, if they are carefully chosen, will greatly assist in fulfilling our aim. And here I am reminded of another passage in Dr. Martineau's article to which I have previously referred, and it is worth repeating. 'You do not,' he asserts, 'reach a child's heart and conscience by giving him a list of all the virtues to learn by rote: in this form they are but chaff, not living seed, and will strike no root.' But lessons may be formed which indirectly help to cultivate the moral and spiritual forces of life to their proper fruition. Nature study may help to inspire a sense of beauty and perfection. The superabundance of animal spirits in a boy which often lead to cruelty and dangerous pursuits may be controlled by illustrative lessons culled from such books as the series of noble lives so ably written by Miss Frances Cooke. Even those common habits of laziness and self-indulgence, so prevalent in girls' lives and in boys', may be checked to some extent by imparting to them the stories of devotion, of earnestness, of fidelity to great principles which abound in the biographical literature so easy of access in this age of cheap reprints. And the more we study the child's mind and come to understand its natural bent, the more the fact will become apparent to us: that in our efforts to fulfil our aims we shall best succeed in impressing our lessons by example, rather than by precept alone. It is common knowledge to all who have succeeded in reaching the child's mind that there is always a desire to admire and emulate the best things, and to hate the mean things; and none are more susceptible to the influence and example of goodness than the young people. They estimate conduct at what it is, not at what it is meant to be; and we shall accomplish much if we can gain for ourselves and for our work, the confidence of our pupils. For then we have awakened in their minds not only a desire but an affection also, which will abide

and abiding will develop into a lasting influence for goodness and righteousness. And when we have implanted this deep sense of moral goodness there will naturally grow up also a larger reverence for God; a reverence which inspires the sense of obligation to please Him: the sense of duty to His Holy Will and Commandments which, though perhaps it seems to older minds crude and elementary, is none the less real to the children. And by this reverence thus awakened we may then impart our lessons about Jesus, and the precepts He taught, with profit and interest. All our aims must concentrate upon this: for again I repeat our work is a religious work; our aim to further that kingdom of righteousness and truth which Jesus Christ proclaimed in His Gospel: and there is nothing else which can avail to train up our children in the way they should go, or lead them, as it is our glorious privilege to do, unto the highest ideals and purposes of the life that now is."

In the discussion Rev. J. A. Kelly said one of the first Sunday Schools was established not many miles from that spot. He agreed that the aim should be to cultivate character. Those in the Sunday School will be the men and women of the future, and we should teach them to be interested in things around them—the farmer not in his farming only, the business man not in his business only, but it should be the aim of teachers to help an interest in empire and in the good management of local and municipal affairs.

Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., said the most valuable work for accomplishing the aim is done outside the school sometimes. The teacher must have a practical sympathy with the scholars. We have to ask scholars to think and feel for themselves. Our main aim is religious. We have to bring the pupils to the point when they realise the transition from a religion of outward authority to one of inward experience. This will help to build up our churches. The greatest aim of all is to make religion a real thing to men, and in this the Sunday School can greatly help.

Rev. J. Kennedy (Larne) referred to the departure of the Chairman from this country, and to Dr. Mellone's book "The Laws of Life." He usually carried a copy in his pocket. There was difficulty in keeping our elder boy scholars, while we could keep the elder girls.

The Chairman invited two English clergy-men visitors to speak, and in response Rev. G. L. Phelps (Evesham) said many men were not inclined to go to church. The aim of the Sunday School teacher should be to show us how to live when we have earned a living. If things were ordered properly we should have to labour only a few hours a day, and should have time to live. The aim is to give boys and girls some idea of what it is to live—to live in harmony with the eternal. The children should be taught there is an Eternal to live in harmony with.

Rev. R. H. Lambley, M.A., said we fail in Sunday School, as in life, not because our theories are different, but we feel the same difference between theory and practice. We want to discover means of bringing down high ideas to a practical form. We should take the religious side of our work down to the infant classes, and treat them in the spirit of kindergarten. If we keep them through the kindergarten stage we shall not lose them. By interchange of teachers of different Churches we should secure a higher aim.

Rev. H. M'Gowan, speaking after the time was expired for discussion, was called to order by the Chairman.

A vote of thanks to paper-readers, to the Congregations of Ballee, Clough, Downpatrick and Rademon for joint hospitality, and to the Chairman, was carried with applause. Rev. M. S. Dunbar responded for the Congregations.

The Chairman called attention to the fact that in consequence of failing health this was the last conference which would be arranged by Rev. Alexander O. Ashworth (as convener), who had arranged these successful meetings for ten years, and held office as convener for fifteen years, and asked for an expression of thanks from the assembly, which was heartily accorded, to which Mr. Ashworth responded.

After the benediction by Mr. Dunbar, the large company adjourned to the Town Hall for tea. The hall was filled to overflowing. This conference was more largely representative than any one previously held, a larger number of schools and churches being represented than on any former occasion.

REMONSTRANT SYNOD OF ULSTER.



THE Eightieth Annual Meeting of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster was held on June 15th in the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, when there was a representative attendance of ministers and elders. The Moderator (Rev. Edgar Lockett, Banbridge), who presided over the deliberations, prior to the commencement of business conducted divine service, and preached an able sermon from Ephesians iv. 3—"Keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." At the conclusion of the service,

The Moderator, in addressing the Synod, said he would like to express on behalf of that Synod the sense of loss at the removal from their midst of the Rev. Dr. Mellone and Rev. W. H. Drummond. They did not belong to the Synod, but to the general body, and he on behalf of the Synod wished them all prosperity in their new spheres—one in the capital of Scotland and the other in the capital of England and the empire. The only matter of business he had to refer to was the acceptance by the Synod of the Code of Discipline, which had been forwarded to

them by the Re-organisation Committee, and which had been sent down to the congregations for approval. In conclusion, he had to thank them for the unfailing kindness they had extended to him throughout the year in that important position.

The Moderator then constituted the Synod by prayer, and the Clerk (Rev. Joseph H. Bibby) called the roll of Presbyteries.

Rev. A. Gordon then moved that Rev. Edgar Lockett be re-elected, and this was seconded by Rev. D. Matts, and cordially adopted. Mr. Lockett then took the chair, and briefly expressed his acknowledgment of the honour done him on re-election.

Rev. J. A. Kelly moved in accordance with previous notice—"That before proceeding to the election of Clerk, the rule limiting the tenure of the clerkship to two years be, and is hereby, rescinded, and that each year an assistant clerk be elected for one year only, with an honorarium of £5, to be paid by the Clerk.

The Clerk seconded the motion, which was opposed by Rev. J. J. Magill and Rev. J. A. Miskimmin, and supported by Rev. Thomas Dunkerley. On being put, the motion was carried by a majority. Rev. J. A. Kelly was then unanimously elected to the Clerkship, and, on taking up the office, stated that he wished it to be expressly understood that he accepted the position for a year only. Rev. W. G. Marsden was unanimously elected Assistant Clerk.

Revs. A. O. Ashworth, H. J. Rossington, G. J. Slipper, and James Kennedy being present, were asked to sit and deliberate.

The Clerk proposed, Rev. Thomas Dunkerley seconded, and it was resolved—"That the best thanks of the Synod are due, and are hereby given, to the Congregation of First Rosemary Street Church for their kindness in granting the use of Meeting-House and vestry for the holding of the Annual and other meetings.

Mr. John Smyth, M.A. (Banbridge), moved, Rev. Thomas Dunkerley seconded, the following resolution, which was carried unanimously: "That in view of the widespread evil and suffering caused by the excessive use of alcoholic liquors, and having regard to the danger to all classes, and especially to the young and inexperienced, the Synod strongly recommends to members of congregations connected with it the desirability of adopting total abstinence, both as the safest attitude for themselves, and as that which will render their influence most beneficial to the general community."

There is a jewel which no Indian mine can buy
No chemic art can counterfeit;
It makes man rich in greatest poverty,
Makes water wine, turns wooden cups to gold,
The homely whistle to sweet music's strain;
Seldom it comes, to few from Heaven sent,
That much in little—all in nought—content.

THE CALVIN QUARTERCENTENARY.



N connection with the Annual Meetings of the Association, divine service was conducted in the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, on the evening of June 15th by Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.Sc., who preached on the Calvin Quartercentenary. Taking as his text 1st Cor. iii. 9, "We are labourers together with God," the preacher said that Calvin was born in the midst of that great awakening when the best part of Christendom shook off the authority of priests, who claimed to speak in the name of an infallible Church, and affirmed the vital importance of the principles which long afterwards the founders of that Association affirmed against the authority of Presbyters, who were imposing a man-made creed on their adherents. The principles then laid down were true to the spirit of the Reformation—namely, the right and duty of individual judgment, guided by a reverent and intelligent interpretation of Scripture, in the light of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. It was necessary to understand the religious atmosphere in which Calvin worked. He was a genius of regulation, of order, of systematic arrangement. Luther created, Calvin ordered. But the men who created were working in the twilight of dawn, and did not fully understand either the system which they were attacking or that which they were founding. They created forces greater than they knew. Even to-day the world was in the full tide of the flood that took its rise in Luther's day. The multiplication of small religious communities was a sign of life, for these were by no means all centres of fanaticism. Many of them were centres of high social aspiration and independent spiritual life. But in Calvin's eyes all this appeared an indiscriminate tumult, and he set himself to develop order out of it. He believed with his whole soul that two things were needful for the welfare of a Christian community—organised thought and organised life. Calvin's idea of organised life was seen in the government of Geneva, where for twenty-five years he was the power behind the State, and where he set up a holy reign of terror. Calvin's Geneva had been pointed to as a model Christian community, but it was a very poor imitation indeed of the city of God. If they turned not to infatuated admirers of Calvin, but to the public records of the city, they would find that at no time was immorality fouler or more deeply seated than when it was covered over with the thickest varnish of religious observance. Nevertheless, outwardly Geneva was sound in the faith under Calvin's rule. Such principles of Church government led inevitably to persecution. The miserable case of Servetus was simply part of a system and the logical outcome of a theory. Before Servetus ever came to Geneva, Calvin wrote letters to the

Protector Somerset in England, in which he distinctly laid it down that heretics ought to be suppressed by the power of the sword, and all who diverged from the beaten track of Calvinistic orthodoxy were heretics. This spirit found utterance even in the Assembly's Longer Catechism, which declares in question 109 that the second commandment forbade the toleration of a false religion, and by a "false religion" the authors of the Catechism meant a non-Presbyterian religion. Verily, "new presbyter was but old priest writ large," and was so still. If they wanted to do justice to Calvin they would do well to forget the sordid story of Geneva, and think only of the great reformer, frail in body, but a giant in intellect, who was able to dictate a creed to nations. After touching on the essentials of Calvin's great system, he (the preacher) said that he was compelled to refer to the statement that the divine decree of predestination did not shut any out of heaven, but only secured the absolute safety of a certain number. This fallacy had been exploded long ago. If the Almighty abandoned a certain part of mankind to the state of sin in which they were born and to its consequences, that was predestination. It was the same denial of mercy and justice, the same damnation of men for what they could not help doing. The bracing moral effect of Calvinism in history was explained by the fact that few true Calvinists were convinced of being predestined to damnation. The Calvinists who made our modern liberties were convinced of being chosen instruments of God's work. Once let a man be a true Calvinist, and at the same time be convinced that he was finally reprobate, then that way madness lay, as they saw in the life of the unhappy Cowper. Proceeding, the preacher showed that Calvin did not invent Calvinism. Its main ideas were there already in the writings of Augustine, in the teachings of Luther, in the minds of men. It was also true that Calvin's central doctrine was suggested in parts of the Bible. But, unlike Calvin, the men of the Bible could see more than one side of truth. No one believed in the sovereignty of God more utterly than St. Paul, yet St. Paul again and again appealed to men, not as passive tools or instruments in Almighty hands, but as labourers together with God. It might seem a vast and impossible idea to realise, yet nothing was clearer or more certain than that He who made men and sent them into the world had left many things for them to do in fulfilling His plans and completing His work. Let them take the familiar question, "What is the chief end of man?" and answer it, not in the half-light of Calvinism, but in the full light of human life and experience, reflected in the Bible and in history—that each one might help God to create and redeem, to build up and perfect His world. The calls to service and sacrifice were unceasing, but this was the delight and glory of life to those who

knew they were labourers together with God, co-operating with the divine order of the world and the one increasing purpose that runs through the ages.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF IRISH NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIANS.



HIS was held on June 16th in the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, there being a good attendance of ministers, elders, and members of the body. Prior to the constitution of the meeting, a communion service was conducted in the church by the Rev. J. J. Magill and Rev. H. J. Rossington. At noon the outgoing President (Rev. Dr. Mellone) took the chair, and constituted the meeting by prayer, after which the roll of membership was called by the Secretary (Rev. James Kennedy).

Rev. Dr. Mellone, in the course of his retiring address, said the time had now come for him to relinquish the honour which they conferred upon him twelve months ago. He could say most sincerely that he had had an exceedingly pleasant year of office. The brethren and fathers had made it as easy for him as they possibly could, and he could hardly find fitting words in which to express the great gratification with which he had perceived the quite unexpected ease with which the supposed laborious duties of the President of that Association could be discharged. The details of their denominational affairs did not give rise to any special point to which he need refer at the present moment. There was only one matter of political importance that called for reference. The measure for the establishment of New Irish Universities passed through both Houses of Parliament during the year. Twelve months ago he had the privilege of reporting what had been done by a small deputation which the Association sent to London for the purpose of interviewing various persons with regard to this measure, and especially that part of it relating to Belfast and the North. The deputation put their views before the gentlemen whom they interviewed, and they had the satisfaction of seeing many of the points suggested by them subsequently embodied in the amendments to the measure. It would of course be ridiculous to claim for the deputation sole credit for the introduction of these points, but he was confident that he was right in saying that some of them might have been overlooked had it not been for the steps taken by the Association. The points, he need hardly say, were all such as were directed to making Belfast University a university in the true sense of the word, and not the tool of any Church, however powerful and however influential it might be.

The Presbyteries of Bangor, Antrim and Templepatrick had nominated for the Presi-

dency Rev. J. J. Magill, of Rademon, and, on the motion of Rev. R. M. King, seconded by Rev. Thomas Dunkerley, Mr. Magill was unanimously and cordially elected.

The President took the chair amidst applause, and expressed his sense of the honour done him in appointing him to the position, and he hoped the members would accord to him throughout the year their sympathy and support.

Rev. James Kennedy was re-elected Secretary, on the motion of Rev. J. H. Bibby, seconded by Rev. T. Munn, and, on the motion of Rev. James Kennedy, seconded by Rev. R. M. King, Rev. J. A. Kelly was re-elected Treasurer.

Rev. R. M. King proposed that the arrangement of the time and place of next year's meeting be left to the General Purposes Committee, and the motion was seconded by Rev. M. S. Dunbar. An amendment that the meeting should be held in the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, on the third Wednesday in June was proposed by Rev. J. A. Kelly, and seconded by Rev. J. H. Bibby. This was carried, and was then unanimously adopted as the substantive motion.

The report of the General Purposes Committee was adopted, on the motion of the Secretary.

Rev. A. Gordon moved:—"That we subjoin the report of the Dean of Residence to the report of the General Purposes Committee and with express instructions to watch on our behalf the framing of the statute relating to deans of residence in the new University."

Rev. J. A. Kelly formally seconded the motion, which was adopted.

Subsequently Mr. Gordon handed in a notice of motion—"That this Association cannot but regard the proposed establishment of the chair of scholastic philosophy in the new University as a distinctly sectarian, and in effect a theological, endowment."

Rev. H. J. Rossington seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

The Treasurer (Rev. J. A. Kelly) submitted the statement of accounts, which was received and adopted.

The report of the Committee on Reorganisation, to which was appended a pamphlet containing the draft of the proposed code of discipline, was submitted by Dr. Rev. Mellone, in the absence of the Convener, Rev. W. H. Drummond, and, on the motion of the former, seconded by Rev. J. A. Kelly, the report was received.

The suggested code was then considered at length, and various amendments to the draft provisions were discussed. The draft, as amended, was then adopted, on the motion of Rev. A. Gordon, seconded by Rev. R. M. King.

The reports of the Sunday School, Temperance and Theological Society Committees were adopted.

On the motion of Rev. A. O. Ashworth,

seconded by Rev. G. J. Slipper, a cordial vote of thanks was passed to the minister and Committee of the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, for their kindness in giving the use of that edifice for the meeting.

The proceedings then terminated with the pronouncing of the benediction by the President.

The Annual Dinner was held on the evening of June 16th at Ye Olde Castle Restaurant.

Obituary.

MR. WILLIAM DAVIDSON, J.P.

We regret to have to record the death, on May 20th, of Mr. William Davidson, J.P., of Ballywoollen, a gentleman who for many years occupied an important position in County Down. Mr. Davidson had reached his eightieth year, but up to a short time ago retained fully his mental, and to a large extent his physical vigour. Deceased was a member of a well-known County Down family which for generations had been engaged in the linen business. Along with his father, the late John Davidson, of Drumaness, he took a large share in the management of the business, and travelled extensively in this country and across the water. Subsequently he joined his father-in-law, the late Arthur Johnston, and the late John M. Perry in the timber business in Downpatrick. During this period and up till his appointment to the Land Commission, he held the office of coroner for the North Division of Down. During the greater part of his life (concurrently with his other occupations) he was an enthusiastic practical agriculturist and a frequent exhibitor of stock at local shows, in which he took a great interest.

The deceased was a Justice of the Peace for County Down, and regularly attended Killyleagh Sessions until deafness and failing health interfered with his magisterial duties. Before the Local Government Act was passed he was frequently a member of the Down Grand Jury. He served for many years on the Poor-law Board of Downpatrick, first as an ex-officio and later as an elected guardian. He took a keen interest in education and the management of national schools. Like his forefathers he was a staunch Unitarian and a leading member of Rademon and Downpatrick Congregations, being the Lord Lieutenant's Inspector of Charities to the body. Though taking no prominent part in politics, he was a Liberal of the old school, and, after the Gladstonian split, always continued a strong Liberal Unionist.

Throughout his long and useful life he bore the character in his native county of a good friend and sterling Christian gentleman. Only recently he had the happiness of celebrating his golden wedding, and our strongest sympathies go out to his widow and son in their great sorrow.

REPORTS.

Belfast: First Church.—The Annual Sunday School Excursion took place on Saturday, June 16th, under ideal conditions. The weather, threatening the night before, could hardly have been more propitious than it proved for the pleasant drive from the Central Hall to Castle Dobbs. There the rain had freshened up the vegetation and given the sylvan surroundings a wonderfully fresh and attractive appearance. Hence the kindness of Mr. Dobbs in permitting the members of the party to roam at will through his charming estate was appreciated to the full. Some found the glen and the ruined castle a great attraction, while others wandered along the banks of the beautiful lake or explored the woods. But when refreshments were served, the charms of the scenery lost their allurements and receded into the background, for a time at least. Later in the day the juveniles, who earlier had wandered through the grounds, contended for the mastery in the foot races, and whether victorious or otherwise, seemed to derive much satisfaction from their feats of prowess. A most enjoyable return journey brought to a conclusion a very successful outing.

Unity Guild.—The first Excursion of the season took place on Saturday, May 22nd, the destination being Helen's Tower. Considering the fact that it was early in the year, the day was not at all unsuited for our purpose and there was consequently a gratifying turnout, over fifty making the journey. Although some members found the walk through the Dufferin Estate somewhat lengthy, the majority enjoyed it to the full, the fresh foliage on the majestic trees, the magnificent carpets of primroses, violets and wild hyacinths, together with the gorgeous yellow blossom of the whins forming a feast for the eyes that could not fail to appeal to town-dwellers. On arrival at the Tower, an ascent was made for the purpose of beholding the magnificent views obtainable on all sides. Tea was served on the grass in true pic-nic fashion, following which steps were re-traced by various courses to the railway station, which was reached in time to escape a heavy shower.

We may build more splendid habitations,
Fill our rooms with paintings and with
sculptures,

But we cannot
Buy with gold the old associations.

—Longfellow.

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Hon. Secretary—Rev. J. A. KELLY.

Saturdays—10 till 2.

Assist. Secretary—Rev. G. J. SLIPPER.

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